

FIVE DEAD IN THE HOUSE

IT WAS THOUGHT ALL HAD ESCAPED
FROM THE BURNING FLATS,

But the Whole Bente Household Was Missing—Their Bodies Found on the Top Floor When the Firemen Could Get In.

Five persons were killed at a fire that began just about midnight last night in the five-story flat house at 138 East Forty-third street. The were:

WILLIAM BENTE, 25 years old, a stenographer.
LOUISE BENTE, 25 years old, his wife.
ELISE BENTE, 25 years old, his sister.
HENRY WEINSTEIN BENTE his niece, daughter of Mrs. Bente.
The maid, L. Bente, 14 years old, daughter of Mrs. Bente.
EDWARD PUGLEY, 35 years old, a painter, who rents a room from the Bentes.

The sudden illumination of the sky in the street near Lexington avenue startled the merry makers who thronged the fair of the Press Club in the Grand Central Palace just as the midnight fire had burst through the roof of No. 138, one of a row of six single flats extending from 131 to 140.

Dwellers in East Forty-second street in the rear of the row of flats discovered the blaze. Policeman Michael Molloy of the Grand Central sub-station also saw the flame and turned in an alarm.

The firemen were on hand in a jiffy, and had ladders placed before the windows before the last frightened tenant came down the smoky stairway.

There were four families in 138, and it was supposed at first that all had been rescued. But five persons on the third floor had vanished. The maid, L. Bente, had been found by the firemen at 1 o'clock this morning.

All of the tenants had come to bed, and had to flee for their lives in their night clothes. Charles H. B. Bjorkwall and his son, Charles H. Bjorkwall, Jr., Mrs. Bjorkwall, and two children lived on the fourth floor.

The next floor down and saw the glare of the fire as it shot up the dumb water shaft. Young Mr. Bjorkwall was the first of the family awakened. He and his wife ran down the stairway through the blinding smoke.

The elder Bjorkwall was hemmed in by fire and ran to the rear of the house and reached the street in time to escape.

Many persons left the Press Club fair to see it. From 138 and the houses on each side male and women in their night gowns and in bath feet poured into the street.

In the confusion it was not possible to ascertain whether all had escaped or not, but it was later reported that the Bentes held, the one in greatest danger, had been seen on the street and were safe.

Capt. Reilly took charge of the fire at 12 o'clock and vigorously enforced the rule permitting none but persons with badges through the lines.

Theatrical Manager Palmer was one of those who had a fair fall.

There was a big attendance of prominent people at the fair, and they viewed the blaze not knowing that it had destroyed five lives from the many windows of the Grand Central Palace.

A Miss Boyiston, who rented a room from the Bentes on the fourth floor, was taken over in hysterics. The flight of the tenants of the two adjoining flats, 139 and 140, was almost simultaneous.

They were in their night clothes and barefooted. All the fugitives were sheltered at the Conservatory of Music at 134, directed across the street from the fire.

Next to the mother and her three daughters and Mrs. Dietz, his sister, who were among the refugees from the two adjoining houses met, and each found that the other had seen nothing of the Bentes and their visitors of the night.

The firemen had begun searching the floors of the flat house of the Bentes while the fire was at its height.

They found no bodies, and it was believed that every tenant had escaped. When the blaze had been subdued on the top floor at 1 A.M. the firemen found the five bodies, four of them in the front room of the Bente flat and the other on the fourth floor. The victims had fled from the fire that burned them from the rear of the flat and hoped to gain the fire windows, where ladders were being raised for the firemen.

All the bodies were partly burned. It was evident, however, that all five persons had been suffocated before the fire reached them.

One of the bodies was taken down the stairs to be sent to the Morgue. Mrs. Bente, the mother of the stenographer, lived near door at 139, to the burned flat.

Her daughter Elsie and the little niece from 140 were visiting the Bentes to stay all night.

William Bente was a nephew of Capt. Theodore Feidstein, who keeps a saloon in Grant street. Bente was married less than a year.

Edward Pugley owned a farm near Vineland, N. J. When he was not at work there he came to this city and worked at his trade as painter.

It is believed that the fire started at the foot of the dumb water shaft, which is about the middle of the house and runs to the top floor.

The flames were first seen on the third floor and almost immediately after they appeared at the first floor.

The house is one of seventeen in Forty-second and Forty-third streets, which are owned by ex-Mayors Hewitt and Cooper. The fire escapes are in the rear, and connect with each balcony.

The tenants might, perhaps, have escaped if they had hurried to the rear of the house and made use of the balconies and ladders.

Five Firemen Killed in Omaha.

OMAHA, Neb., June 3.—During a heavy rain storm to-night fire was discovered at the Shivers Furniture Company, the entire city fire department was called to the scene. A high wind was blowing. At 9:15 o'clock one of the walls fell on seven firemen. Five of them were instantly killed.

Hotel Proprietor Kingstey of Philadelphia Commits Suicide.

PHILADELPHIA, June 3.—William T. Kingstey, one of the proprietors of the Continental Hotel, committed suicide on his hotel farm on the outskirts of the city, this afternoon at 4 o'clock.

He was found with a bullet wound back of his right ear and a revolver by his side. The suicide was not reported until late to-night.

Mr. Kingstey had been a sufferer from nervous prostration for some time.

He was walking about his barn this afternoon in a melancholy mood, and just as he approached the building of his manager, William Smith, he pulled a revolver from a pocket and placed it back of his ear, fired, at self dead.

More Cable Cars for Broadway.

Cable cars will be run on the Broadway road between Third with horse cars, between the hours of 9 A. M. and 10 P. M.

The Weather.

The thermometer at Perry's pharmacy in Tea St. building recorded the temperature yesterday as follows:

	1892	1883	1892	1883
9 A. M.	73°	60°	33°	50°
12 M.	73°	60°	33°	50°
3 P. M.	73°	60°	33°	50°
6 P. M.	73°	60°	33°	50°
9 P. M.	73°	60°	33°	50°
MAXIMUM	73°	60°	33°	50°
MINIMUM	73°	60°	33°	50°
AVERAGE	73°	60°	33°	50°

For modern New York, partly cloudy, with showers in afternoon or evening; breezes; favorable to much wind.

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